

ABSTRACT

- 5    A method for recovering hydrocarbon trapped in a hydrate formation, comprising the steps of
- (a)    contacting the hydrate formation with an aqueous solution comprising from 10% to 75% by weight of a salt such as potassium formate or acetate salt to liberate
- 10    hydrocarbon from the hydrate formation and producing a mixture of hydrocarbon and water vapour;
- (b)    transporting the hydrocarbon/water vapour mixture and the aqueous solution to a separator, whereby the said aqueous solution absorbs water vapour from the mixture during the transportation step, to form a more dilute aqueous solution of the alkali metal
- 15    salt, thereby inhibiting formation of hydrocarbon hydrates;
- (c)    separating hydrocarbon from said dilute aqueous solution;
- (d)    regenerating the aqueous solution of step (a) by heating said dilute aqueous solution to remove absorbed water vapour; and
- (f)    recycling the regenerated aqueous solution to step (a).